

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 04567 201508Z

62

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 04567

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, GW, PL

SUBJECT: GERMAN-POLISH ECONOMIC RELATIONS

1. ECONOMICS MINISTER FRIDERICHs TRAVELLED TO WARSAW
ON MARCH 17-18 TO LEAD THE GERMAN DELEGATION TO THE
FIRST MEETING OF THE GERMAN-POLISH GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION.
ACCORDING TO AN ECONOMICS MINISTRY SOURCE WHO
ACCOMPANIED FRIDERICHs, THE GERMANS ATTEMPTED TO
ADOPT A "BUSINESS-AS-USUAL" APPROACH ON THE OUTSTANDING
ECONOMIC ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BUT THEY
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PAGE 02 BONN 04567 201508Z

WERE QUICKLY REBUFFED BY THE POLES. THE POLES MADE

IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THERE COULD BE LITTLE PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT UNTIL POLITICAL RELATIONS WERE IMPROVED AND THAT MEANS A SOLUTION TO THE COMPENSATION-EMIGRATION ISSUE. FRIDERICH'S DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM DURING HIS VISIT BUT LITTLE IF ANY HEADWAY WAS MADE IN RESOLVING IT.

2. THE MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEM OF CONCERN TO BOTH COUNTRIES IS GERMANY'S GROWING TRADE SURPLUS WITH POLAND; OVER DM2 BILLION IN 1974. THERE IS A COMMON RECOGNITION THAT UNLESS POLISH IMPORTS FROM GERMANY ARE CUT BACK SUBSTANTIALLY, THE ONLY WAY TO EFFECTIVELY REDUCE THIS SURPLUS IS TO INCREASE THE EXPORT OF POLISH RAW MATERIALS EITHER IN RAW OR IN PROCESSED FORM TO GERMANY. DURING HIS VISIT, FRIDERICH'S EXPRESSED INTEREST IN GERMAN-POLISH COOPERATION IN LARGE PROJECTS TO DEVELOP POLISH RAW MATERIALS SUCH AS COPPER OR COAL. THE FRG RECOGNIZES THAT SUCH COOPERATION CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE AFTER THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP HAS IMPROVED AND THAT IN THE MEANTIME THE PRESSURE MAY BUILD UP FOR THE POLES TO TAKE SOME RESTRICTIVE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THE GROWING TRADE IMBALANCE. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, A FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE STATED THAT IT WAS UP TO THE POLES TO ADOPT A MORE REALISTIC POLITICAL POLICY VIS-A-VIS GERMANY IMPLYING THAT THE FRG IS NOT PREPARED TO CHANGE ITS POSITION SOLELY IN ORDER TO PROTECT ITS LARGE EXPORT MARKET IN POLAND.

3. IN SPITE OF THE LACK OF PROGRESS ON THE BIG ISSUES, THE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION DID ESTABLISH SEVEN WORKING GROUPS IN THE MACHINERY, CHEMICAL, ELECTRONICS, SHIP CONSTRUCTION, MINING AND ENERGY, LIGHT INDUSTRY, AND METAL WORKING SECTORS. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD MEET AGAIN BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR IN BONN.
HILLENBRAND

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